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Management and the Environment for Implementation of Policy Change: Part One

Political Mapping

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past ten years, with the continuing and apparently insoluble economic crisis afflicting most parts of the developing world, the competition for ever-diminishing resources has increased notably. The effect of the crisis on the public sector, and especially the functional areas of the public sector, has been singular and dramatic. Even countries that once had prospering and relatively efficient public sectors are now confronted with the deterioration of priority programs, a general slashing in the level of services offered, an inability to maintain a technological presence, and rampant desertion of professional staff—all of which are products of decreasing budgetary allocations and diminishing resources. At the same time this deterioration has occurred, the public sector has been asked to take on the challenge of implementing significant policy changes, including decentralization, privatization of state activities, macro-economic adjustment and liberalization, as well as a general shrinking of the role of the state—actions that frequently threaten powerful actors and vested interests both within and outside the public sector. With the combination of deteriorating resources and major shifts in policy orientation, even the funding of budgets for supposedly vital services such as health and education cannot be considered a given; rather, each ministry or agency must compete on ever more difficult terms with other actors. Ministries must lobby, politic, and form coalitions simply to maintain their levels of resource allocation, let alone think about increasing their shares. In short, agencies must pay more attention to how they can obtain resources. This increasingly involves the development of **political** strategies designed to improve a ministry or agency's clout in determining who gets what. When faced with the need to obtain additional resources for new projects or refocus the objectives or policies of the agency in ways that will threaten resource levels of already-established projects of other agencies, the need for political analysis and strategy development is all the more vital.

Generally, managers and professionals in the public sector are poorly equipped to deal with either political analysis or the formulation of political strategies. When injected into the budget process for the first time, many discover that their sector's needs are not automatically met. To the contrary, rapidly declining levels of budget authority for the more vulnerable sectors such as education and health, attest to their

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inability to defend themselves against more able, though perhaps less needy, competitors for budget resources. When faced with the need to increase or shift resources to implement changing policies or objectives, the task becomes doubly difficult.

This and the following Technical Note of this series review political and environmental mapping and analytical techniques aimed at developing management skills in designing improved strategies for achieving goals and objectives. Part One covers macro-political mapping and political resource analysis while Part Two micro-political mapping, policy network analysis and force-field analysis. Together, these techniques help in assessing the level of competition faced by the public manager, the channels of access to critical decisions, and the possibilities for coalitional arrangements to help achieve objectives.

Politics: An Informal Definition

It has been said that politics is the art of determining who gets what, where, and when. It has also been said that there is no such thing as a free lunch. These two ideas are critical to understanding political analysis and how to use it effectively. Politics is based on the notion that resources are scarce and that decisions must be made regarding how such resources are allocated. The function of politics is deciding who gets what resources and when those resources should be delivered. Who decides is usually what is taken to be "the government" or some other equivalent ruling body. On a more micro level, the decision maker may be the CEO of a firm, or perhaps the Minister of a cabinet department. That person is generally accorded such power through a process of legitimization that permits her or him to make decisions regarding who gets what in the allocation of resources. But how are such decisions made? What are the criteria that indicate that one actor will prevail over another in the allocation of scarce resources? Such decisions are made based on what the petitioner can bring to the deal and what the decision maker can and is willing to offer in return.

Some Premises About Politics and Politicians:

Having said that politics is essentially a transaction, it is important to note that the techniques of analysis presented here are based on a series of elementary, but fundamental, premises.

No government can stand entirely on its own. While this perhaps seems overly elementary, it is interesting to note that many governments think otherwise.

To remain in office a government must have the support of key actors. A government must have support in order to remain in office. However, not just any kind of support will do; the government must enjoy the support of key and powerful actors. In many countries, if the military decides to withdraw support from the chief executive, the government's chance of remaining in office will diminish dramatically. Likewise, support from a major political party in a democratic environment will generally be vital to remaining in office. A vote of "no confidence" by the prime minister's party in a parliamentary democracy signals the end of that government.

Without support, governments do not have authority. The greater the support for a government, the more it can do, and the greater its authority to make decisions. Support represents permission to make decisions. Conversely, when support is withdrawn, the government's options narrow dramatically and it can do less. Without support, any decision is likely to meet with criticism and resistance.

Without authority, governments cannot implement decisions. Perhaps more important than the ability to make decisions is the ability to implement decisions. Here, it is vital that decision makers have authority; that not only are they permitted to make decisions, but they are capable of enforcing the implementation of those decisions. With authority, those who would resist decisions can be made to comply, but without authority, governments are unable to extract obedience. Key actors in positions to sabotage or otherwise modify either the content or outcomes of decisions can be neutralized by a government that possesses proper authority.

Support cannot be obtained without cost. Support is given with the expectation of receiving something in return. Support can only be obtained by offering benefits to those capable of giving support. The quality and quantity of benefits offered are instrumental in determining the quality and quantity of support given. Key actor support will be more costly than the support of actors who aren't very important. To induce support, the government may offer different kinds of benefits—material, positions of influence, or the chance to hear one's views defended—but benefits must be offered.

The offer of support may be used to obtain benefits or increase influence in the government. Since the government, or those who aspire to

governmental positions, need support, the offer of support can be negotiated and/or "sold to the highest bidder." Just as companies compete for clients or markets for their products, politicians must also compete for support. This gives clients (or supporters) the opportunity to use their support to obtain more benefits through negotiation. Those who can offer more valuable support to the government will be accorded a more important role or voice.

In effect, politics may be viewed as a transaction in which support is traded for benefits or influence. But the important message here is that support is vital (decisions cannot be implemented without it), there is always a cost to obtain it, and there is generally competition for that support. Looking at politics in this way helps us understand which actors are important and provides insight into the factors that affect the capacity of a government to implement decisions.

POLITICAL MAPPING

Two elements that complicate political analysis are the large number of actors present in any given political system and the vast quantity of information about politics available. In virtually any political system there are, quite literally, hundreds of different political actor groups. To analyze the influence and/or capacity to influence of each group would require much more time and interest than a manager in the public sector has available. At the same time, the quantity of information available about politics is overwhelming. Much of what we see, hear and talk about concerns politics. Tune the radio to the morning news and chances are that most of what is discussed concerns politics. Likewise, in the first section of the newspaper political themes predominate. Even at the office and at lunch, much of the conversation revolves around politics or politicians. With the quantity of information available, analysis of politics, and determining what is important for the official, is an extremely difficult task. But this difficulty stems largely from problems of processing the information; how to organize the information and make it useful.

In much the same vein, there is also a tremendous amount of information available regarding the physical attributes of the environment in which we live. However, when we want to quickly and accurately describe that environment we can refer to a map. Depending on the scale, we can show the most important and even lesser details; hills, valleys, rivers, highways, villages, towns and cities. We can also see how far it is from one place to another, or even get an idea of how big a town is depending on the size of the letters.

We can use the same technique to describe the political terrain in which a politician or public official operates. The purpose of the political map is to organize and reduce the amount of information available regarding politics to a manageable quantity in order to focus on those aspects of the terrain most important to the decisions managers must make. The map organizes and identifies the most important political actors and spatially illustrates their relationships to one another.

Organization of the Political Map

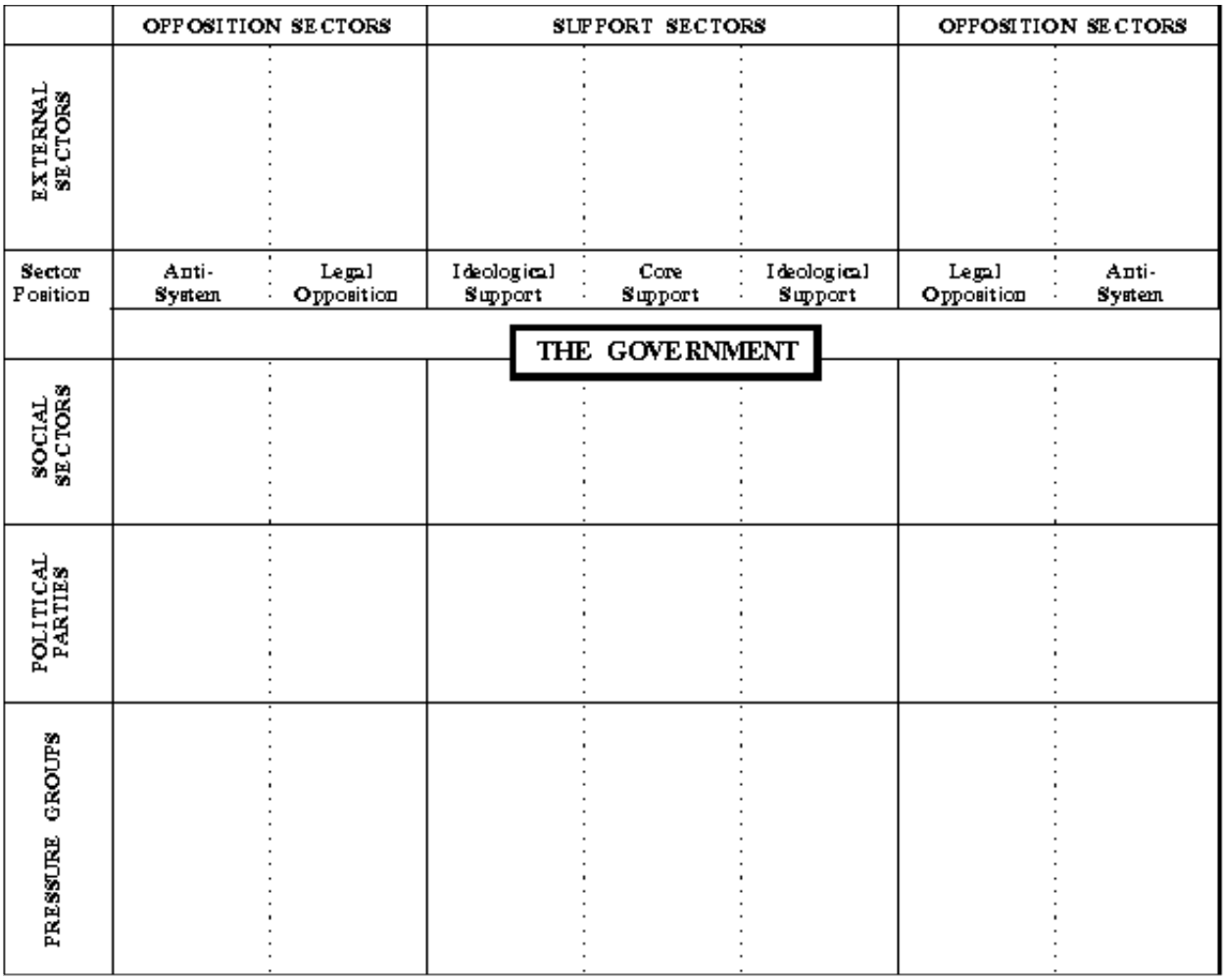
The political map, (Figure 1) like the geographical map, has two dimensions: a horizontal (latitudinal) dimension and a vertical (longitudinal) dimension. At the center of the map is the government. The primary reason for locating the government at the center is simply because the government is the primary focus of decision making regarding how the benefits of society will be distributed. Political activity is centered on and directed toward influencing the government and its policy decisions.

Along the vertical axis, the different types of political actors are organized into four sectors: external actors, social groups, political parties, and pressure groups. The purpose of the horizontal axis is to assess the degree to which each group supports the government. Support for the government varies from core or central support to ideological or mild support while opposition is differentiated as either legal or anti-system opposition.

A criticism sometimes made regarding political mapping is its lack of dynamism. Unlike the geographical map, changes in the political terrain occur often and sometimes rapidly. Thus, a single political map may be likened to a snapshot—it is a loyal interpretation of the political system at a particular point in time, but not at another. While it is certainly true that a particular map represents a particular point in time, by combining a series of maps over time, we can begin to appreciate the dynamics of politics—just as time-lapse photography (through a series of individual photos) can reveal the opening of a flower. Actors begin to take on movement; we can see how support for the government waxes and wanes; and we can see coalitions take shape and later fall apart.

Figure 1

Political Map



Political Actors

The Government: The government, or more precisely the head of government, is the single most important political actor. It is the actor ultimately responsible for deciding between different and/or conflicting alternatives and demands, and the source to which other actors turn when they cannot resolve disputes among themselves. As a consequence, the government is always at the center of the map. A government need not be elected, nor need it be "legitimate" in the legalistic sense; rather, it is the actor that has the role of final arbiter. It should also be noted that the head of government here may be the president, a general, a dictator, a junta, a "national directorate," or whoever is designated the role of final decision maker.

Political mapping is not restricted to the national level. Mapping is also useful at the provincial or municipal level, and can be applied even to single organizations such as enterprises or Ministries. In such cases, the "government" is, again, the individual who has the role of final decision maker. If mapping were to be applied to the health sector, such a position might well be occupied by the Minister of Health; in a private company, such positions are occupied by the chief executive officer of the organization. Again, even at the micro-level, the "government" occupies the center.

Other Political Actors

Besides "The Government," there are four other sets of political actors: social sectors, political parties, pressure groups, and external actors. Each of these

groups has particular relevance in the political scenario, but the relevance and degree to which each type of actor is mobilized varies. Each plays rather different roles and employs different types of strategies and objectives despite the fact that in one way or another, each wants to influence political outcomes.

Social Sectors: These consist of large, social groups of individuals that share some general, but loose, characteristic or affinity. Such groups are amorphous and unorganized, with very poor mobilization capacity. Nevertheless, their commonality of interest can be manifested through certain mechanisms, i.e., in the way they vote in an election. Among such groups are typically found urban workers, the urban middle class, small farmers, large landholders, industrialists, agro-export farmers, urban professionals, or minority groups. Such groups are most highly mobilized during electoral periods, but primarily because candidates make special appeals to such groups. For instance, most electoral campaign messages and rhetoric are directed at these groups. Indeed, political parties and candidates will often single out certain groups for special attention. Once the electoral period is over, however, such groups lose relevance because of their lack of organization and inability to mobilize.

Political Parties: These are groups often composed of several social sectors, whose main objective is to influence public policy through the direct exercise of the instruments of power. While political parties are generally associated with electoral politics, parties can take on rather unorthodox forms. For instance, in many parts of the world the military often acts as if it were a political party not content simply to influence indirectly public policy but frequently desiring to assume direct exercise of the instruments of power. Guerrilla groups, even though they employ violence rather than electoral methods, still have as their main objective the direct exercise of power—they are therefore, political parties. The principal defining characteristic of a political party is whether or not it wishes to exercise power.

Pressure Groups: Pressure groups are groups of individuals that share a relatively narrow set of interests and that seek to defend or promote such interests by influencing the direction of public policy. But unlike political parties, pressure groups do not seek the direct exercise of the instruments of power and authority. It is important to note that virtually any group, as long as it simply seeks to influence policy and not exercise power, can be considered a pressure group. Under these criteria, groups as diverse as labor confederations, business groups, the Catholic church, or organizations, agencies and ministries within the public sector (which try to influence the budget allocation process among other things) can all be considered pressure groups. While public sector actors are part of the government, they also try to influence the direction of public policy—for instance, the education ministry will try to expand its share of the budget even when austerity measures are being introduced. Since pressure groups are virtually the only actors that can articulate and channel demands during non-electoral periods, pressure groups serve a vital role in designing and determining public policy.

External Actors: In many regards, these groups are similar to and frequently play a role nearly identical to pressure groups. The primary difference is that such actors are not "natives," their origins are from outside the country. Nevertheless, they seek to influence the direction of public policy in defense or promotion of their own particular interests. Included among such groups might be transnational corporations, governments of other countries (working through their embassies or assistance agencies), missionary groups, private volunteer organizations, international political party organizations, banks, bilateral and multilateral assistance agencies, and so on. In open economies and polities, such groups can play an extremely powerful role.

Opposition and Support: Locating the Actors

Once actors have been categorized, attention may then be turned to analyzing their support or opposition to the government. Support for the government is broken into two categories: central or core support and moderate or "ideological support." Opposition is also divided into two types: legal or "loyal" opposition and anti-system opposition.

Core Support: Core support is the type most vital to the maintenance in power of the government and the most important to the assurance of power and decisional authority. Groups in this sector are unequivocal in their support for the regime and their interests are the most closely identified with the government's objectives and policies. They tend to be powerful actors such as the major political parties, the military, or major pressure groups. Because such groups invest heavily in the government (in terms of support), they also receive the most important positions in the government, the most substantial material benefits, and are the most influential in the decisional process. Loss of support from any of these groups can be very damaging to a government with

respect both to its survival as well as to its capacity to implement decisions. For example, in most LDCs, withdrawal of support by the military would likely result in the downfall of the government. While core support groups provide political solvency to the government through their support, it is not without a price ... they **demand** benefits and influence. When there are several such competing groups, and the government has relatively few resources to hand out, difficult decisions will have to be made that might cause the exit of one or more of these actors. Ironically then, it can be just as dangerous to have too much core support as to have too little. Core support groups will likely include the ruling political party, key elements of the bureaucracy, the military (especially in developing countries), and certain key constituency groups.

Moderate or Ideological Support: Groups located in this sector agree with the government on most issues, but their support is much weaker and less committed than core support, and is often characterized as "silent support." For these groups, support for the government entails little investment of time, money or commitment—and therefore little risk. But at the same time, since the groups are not particularly committed, or have little to offer, they receive relatively few benefits from the government in return; they are generally at the margin of the decisional process and unable to exert much influence in the determination of important policy. While such groups play only a minor role in policy making they do benefit from the policies.

The government must also take care not to alienate or ignore these moderate support groups. Their demands must be taken into account with some regularity, and must be satisfied or the groups will withdraw support from the government and begin to look elsewhere for satisfaction of their demands. Ideological support groups are important in that they are candidates to become core support should others decide to withdraw. Since satisfaction of such groups does not require expenditure of large sums of resources, the government can comfortably afford to maintain several groups in the ideological support sectors. Ideological support groups could include minor coalition partners, large constituency groups such as farmers or workers, and pressure groups of minor consequence to the vitality of the government.

Legal Opposition: Because they do not share common goals and objectives, groups in the legal opposition sectors generally disagree with policy decisions of the government and have no vested interest in the government; nevertheless, they are strongly in agreement with the fundamental rules of the political system. They oppose the government but not the system, and in systems with alternability, the legal opposition will become the next government. In a democracy, the legal opposition presents an alternative to the government and at the same time acts as a watchdog. The legal opposition will make deals with the government in pursuit of its own interests. It is important for the government to be attentive, if not necessarily compliant, to the demands of the legal opposition so as to avoid the risk of such groups turning anti-system. Without periodic satisfaction of demands, the legal opposition can radicalize. Among such groups might be found the primary opposition political parties, business groups, or opposition labor groups.

Anti-system Opposition: As implied in the name, these groups not only do not share the same values and objectives as the government, they are opposed to the system as a whole. In order to be satisfied, they require that the fundamental rules of the political game be drastically changed. They are opposed not only to who makes the decisions but also to how the decisions are made. Since their ideas and values are so conflictive with the norm, such groups tend to be repressed and are often obliged to act clandestinely. And because their ideas do not find easy acceptance, they frequently resort to violent means. Among such groups one might find guerrillas on one side of the political spectrum and death squads on the other. What they have in common is that the system cannot satisfy their demands.

Location of Actors on the Map:

The location of a group or actor on the map depends on a number of variables, and not simply the degree to which the group supports the government. In locating a group on the map there are two dimensions to be considered: first, the location of the group in terms of its support or opposition to the government and second, the position of the group to the left or the right of the regime on the map. With respect to the first factor, a group will be located toward the core support area to the degree that it conforms to the following indicators:

the group is in basic agreement with the fundamental rules of the political game

the group agrees with the objectives, goals, and policies of the regime

the group is important or critical to the government's permanence in power

the group is influential in the determination of important policies

the group receives important benefits

Those groups that fulfill all of these characteristics will most certainly be located in the very center, and be the major actors within the political system. It must be noted, again, that simple agreement with the government on major issues is necessary but not sufficient to place a group in the center.

The placement of a group to the left or the right of the regime is often a subjective decision. The reason for dichotomizing the map is to distance those that have little in common or who differ substantially on general policy orientation, ideology, or values. Such actors will rarely form coalitions or otherwise politically participate together. When there are two powerful, but opposite, actors in opposition, they tend to cancel each other out and only present a very diminished threat to the government.

The placement of a group to the left or the right of the government will depend on whether the analyst believes that the group is "more progressive" or more "conservative" than the government ... whether the group is more "interventionist" or less "interventionist" than the state ... whether the group is more "leftist" or more "rightist" than the regime. As can be seen, such judgments will be situational, and will depend on the context in which one is making the judgment. Regardless of which criteria are chosen for making such decisions, the criteria ought to be clear and consistent. It might also be noted that in certain cases, the distribution of right and left can change overnight, as is the case when a socialist government is defeated by a party with neo-liberal leanings.

Reading the Map

Reading the political map is really answering a series of questions about the map. Beginning with the center and moving out toward the extreme, the first set of questions looks at the degree of support for the regime. How much support is there, and how intense or committed is that support? What is the actual number of groups in support? Are critical actors in the center or are several off to one side or another, indicating only lukewarm support? Is the support balanced, or is it over-reliant on one particular type of group, such as labor unions or the military?

Looking at Figure 2, the Government has fairly substantial support in the core sector. However, that support is concentrated mostly in and among big business or powerful economic interests (typical in countries undergoing economic shock therapy). This support is backed by the international donors, whose economic resources make them powerful interests. While the government is not over-reliant on a particular group, the number of "winners" in this scenario are few, while those in opposition are many.

The next set of questions deals with cohesiveness of support. Are there signs of fragmentation? Occasionally, one might have support from the official leadership of an organization but the rank and file may be opposed. Under these circumstances, can the leadership exercise sufficient control over the rank and file to assure continued and reliable support?

Figure 2 shows a serious problem with cohesion within the Government's coalition National Alliance. There are two major factions. The Progressive Democrats sit on the border between opposition and support, while the Authentic Liberal Party is split from the Liberal Party. With such polarized partners, coalition management for the Government will be difficult. Failure could result in an opposition Congress and loss of key cabinet ministers.

Finally, one should examine where support for the government is concentrated. If it is heavily concentrated in the core support area, it will prove very costly to maintain over the long haul. Are there groups located in the ideological support area? How important are these groups and how expensive to the government would it be to mobilize them? It should be remembered that it is important for the government to maintain an adequate reserve of such support precisely so that it can be mobilized for support. In Figure 2, the government may find that maintaining such powerful support is rather costly.

In reading the opposition sectors, several elements should be kept in mind: first, how many groups are there in the opposition? It should not be surprising to find many more actors in opposition than in active support. In LDCs, resources to satisfy demands are in scarce supply, so that only a relative few can be satisfied, leaving many others discontent ... and in opposition. Nevertheless, if there is a significant difference in quantity between opposition and support, there may be cause for worry. One normally expects groups from the social sectors to be predominantly in the opposition because they are the largest, most

amorphous, least identifiable, and least committed and hence, the most difficult and costly to satisfy.

However, if an election is approaching, some of those groups ought to be returning to the support sectors. If not, the governing party will certainly suffer on election day.

Second, how intense and committed is the opposition? If it is relatively uncommitted, then the prospects of mobilization against the government will diminish — a committed opposition will be much more difficult.

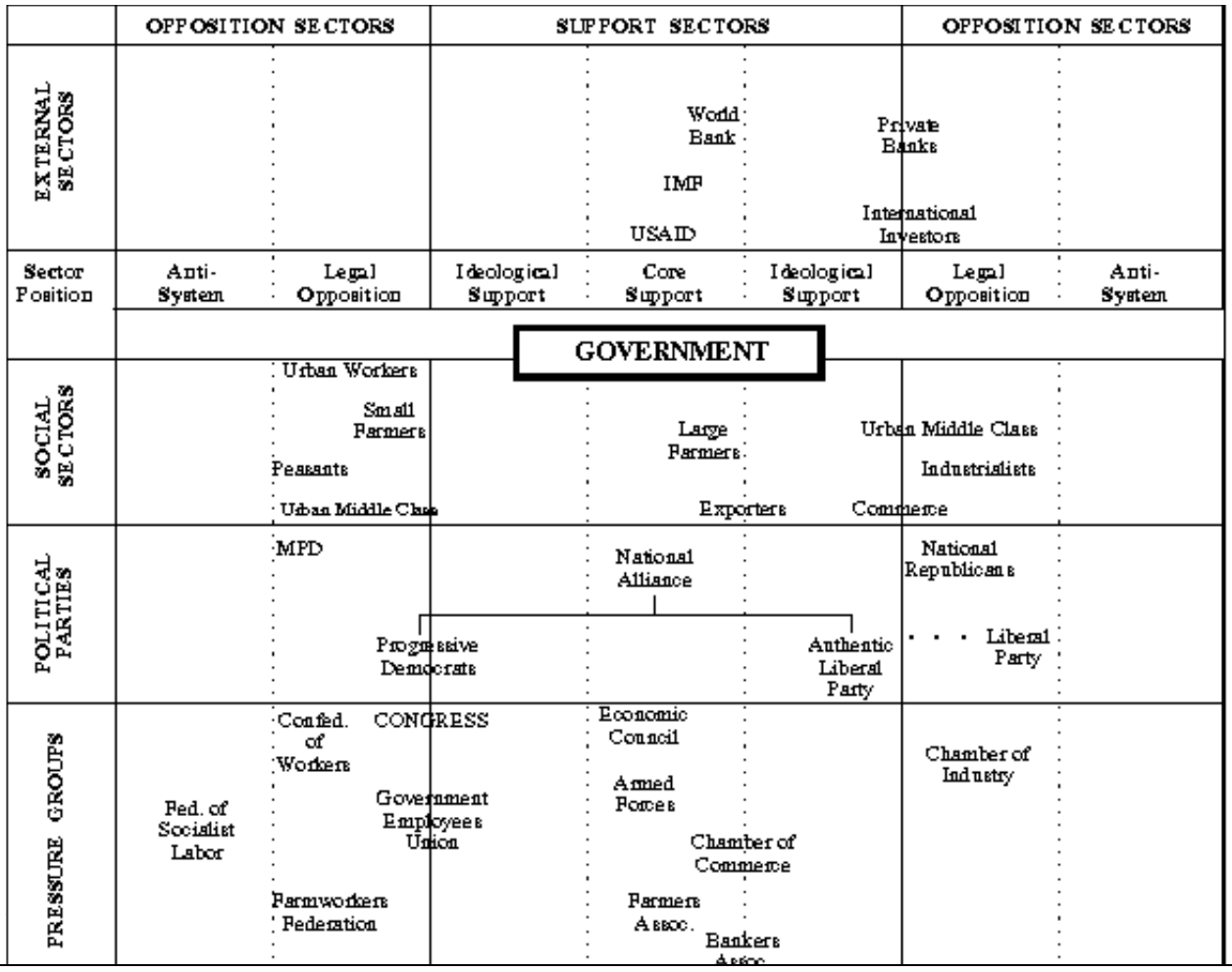
In Figure 2, there is a good deal of opposition, but it does not appear to be particularly intense, as can be noted by those groups straddling the line between opposition and support. The lack of clear link between groups or concentration also signifies relative weakness of the opposition.

Third, how much of the opposition is concentrated in the anti-system? Large quantities of opposition of this type is costly and will have a wasting effect on the government, as in the cases of El Salvador and Nicaragua during the 1980s.

Fourth, are there important alliances in the process of formation? Is there evidence of recent collaboration among important sectors, such as the labor movement, the private sector, or among political parties on one side of the spectrum or the other? Are large labor confederations forming or umbrella business associations being put together? Finally, is the opposition balanced? When there are roughly the same number of opposition actors on one side as the other, there will be a neutralizing effect — divide and conquer, playing one group off another, both are viable strategies when the opposition is conveniently divided.

In Figure 2, there are no apparent alliances or coalitions in formation. The lack of ties between either business or labor groups allows the Government the possibility of playing one group against another. In the present

Figure 2
An Illustrative Political Map



case, the lack of ties between opposition on the left means the Government can concentrate on keeping the business community happy, and not worry too much about labor, at least until the next election.

In sum, Figure 2's Government faces two challenges: first, it must maintain the support of the business community. To do so, it must maintain an adequate flow of resources and benefits to them. Second, the Government needs to shore up its coalition. The repercussions of shifts into the opposition of key players would be quite serious in terms of capacity to make and implement policy.

In general, a political map should be read with an eye to seeing the whole picture rather than concentrating on particular details. It should be remembered that the map is an imperfect instrument, and close detailed analysis may magnify distortions.

Resources and the Determination of Influence:

If politics is essentially a transaction, i.e., the exchange of benefits for support, then the medium of that exchange is resources. Resources have been defined elsewhere as "articles of worth that individuals or organizations may be able to expend, save, or invest to help accomplish desired goals." More specifically, in politics, resources are used by the government to obtain support from the various political sectors, and by the sectors to obtain benefits or influence in the policy process. For instance, the government can offer the possibility of tax exemptions or import privileges to exporters in order to gain their support in economic reform policy. Likewise, powerful labor unions can use the threat of general strikes to preserve public transport subsidies, even though such subsidies contribute to the public deficit. Possession of resources is vital to both the government and the sectors: without resources to dispense, the government will be unable to attract the support vitally needed to make and implement decisions. Without resources, the sector group will not attract the attention of the government, and thus will be unable to influence the direction of policy. Although the range of potentially useful resources is wide, resources can be divided into five major types: information, economic or material, status, legitimacy/authority, and violence.

Information: The adage that knowledge or information is power is only partially correct. Were it entirely true, one can imagine that heads of large data-processing services or librarians would be much more powerful than they actually are. Information is certainly a necessary component to power, but it is not sufficient. It is the ability to process opportunely and to use valuable information that counts—not simply the mere possession of that information. Information as a resource might consist of new ideas regarding solutions to problems, data regarding the behavior of the economy, the build-up of military forces that might threaten a country, trade secrets regarding new technological advances—in short, it is knowledge about some particular phenomenon. To the extent that information is held exclusively, the more valuable it is; widely known information has relatively little value as a resource.

Information is only valuable if it can be used, and used opportunely. The person with the "idea ahead of its time" will have less impact than one with the right idea at the right time. For instance, to know that a country will devalue its currency is certainly an important piece of information but it is information that will likely be shared by many; however, the more important and valuable information about exactly when that devaluation will occur will be shared by very few. The capacity to disseminate information is also important; in a repressive society, dissemination may be restricted, thereby undermining the value of information and causing expenditure of other resources developing alternative channels. Finally, if information is to be valuable, it must be credible and persuasive. Part of the reason for the ascendancy of economists in policy circles is that they present plans that have the appearance of being at once credible and persuasive —even though they may not necessarily be correct.

Economic: Economic resources are material goods and services that can be bartered for other goods and services or exchanged for money. Examples might include an organization's assets, control of public utilities, control over means of production, and access to or control of credit. For the government, economic resources are vital to provide material benefits to constituents, to construct roads, maintain subsidies, build bridges, and thus gain or maintain support. For the different sector groups, economic resources can finance a candidate's electoral campaign, purchase vital information, or even obtain prestige. The mere possession of large stocks of goods and services does not imply vast stocks of political resources. Can the goods and services be expeditiously and effectively mobilized to some political end? If not, their value as potential political resources is diminished. Were mere possession of economic resources sufficient, then the thesis of economic power being equivalent to political power would certainly be correct. By that argument,

private sector associations or business groups should be the most powerful political groups. However, that is not always true. The directors and leaders of these groups frequently find it extraordinarily difficult to mobilize their potential resources. As a consequence, such associations are generally ill-equipped to pay for publicity campaigns or to commission studies in defense of the interests of the private sector. Thus, the important measure of the worth of such resources is the quantity that can be mobilized when most needed.

Status: Status can be viewed as the deference or prestige awarded to individuals or groups because of their position in the social structure. The position accorded a group or individual in society can be used to obtain other benefits. Individuals with high perceived status are almost always accorded a high level of credibility and may be regarded as opinion leaders. Political candidates will generally seek out groups they consider to be of high status such as medical doctors or business associations to support them on the assumption that others will be impressed by the endorsement of distinguished groups. Likewise, candidates will scrupulously avoid association with nefarious groups. A druglord may be able to easily finance the campaign of a candidate to high office, but such an association would have a disastrous impact on the candidate's chances. The concept of status also applies to the government. At the outset of a government, it is relatively easy to attract highly qualified talent for ministerial or other important posts, but as the government wears on, and as its credibility and status begin to decline, it will become increasingly difficult to attract qualified talent. Governments or ministers with high status will also find it easier to get compliance with their wishes than those without.

Legitimacy/Authority: A government does not automatically have the "right" to rule. An election simply concedes "permission" to rule until the next election. By the same token, the government does not automatically have authority; again, it is conceded or "legitimized" by the government's constituents. Without that legitimacy, the government will have no authority—it will be unable to govern. Legitimacy is not simply established by a law or the constitution, it is accorded by the sector groups—sector groups give permission to the government to make decisions. If that permission is withdrawn (constitutionally or not) the government will be unable to implement decisions, and indeed may be at risk of a coup d'etat. Legitimacy and authority are counterparts; the more legitimacy a government is accorded, the more authority it will have.

Some groups are more capable of lending legitimacy than others. The military in many LDCs, though relatively small, numerically speaking, carries a considerable legitimizing capacity. When the military decides to withdraw its support from a government, the speculation is when, not whether, the government will fall. Likewise, a vote of no-confidence for the prime minister by the majority in a parliament will be fatal to the government. One measure of a group's "legitimacy" resources is the importance of that group to the government's permanence in power.

Coercion: The use of force or coercion to obtain certain goals or objectives can be an important resource for both the government and other political actors. Coercion, when used by the government, includes repression, torture, or economic persecution; for political actors it can include guerrilla actions, strikes, boycotts, demonstrations, or violent actions. Groups such as landless peasants who have little else in the way of resources at their command will resort to land invasions. Right-wing extremist groups, dissatisfied with the government's treatment of alleged subversives will form death squads. Likewise, when labor unions fail to respond to the government's demands to halt a general strike, water cannons and tear gas will be used to forcibly disperse them. Businessmen irritated over the imposition of a new tax might resort to a boycott or "business strike."

To be effective as a resource, however, violence or coercion must be controlled. A strike that turns into looting will undermine the usefulness of the strike and turn sympathy away from the union. Likewise, police repression that turns brutal, will provoke harsh and negative reactions, thus reducing the effectiveness of the repression and the status of the government as well.

Resources and Strategy:

For political groups and actors, resources are the means for obtaining benefits and influence. For the government, they are the means for attracting and maintaining support. The level of resources possessed by the group or actor are determinant in the type of strategy that may be chosen in order to obtain those benefits and influence. A political actor, be it an interest group or other type, must choose a strategy appropriate to the type and level of resources it possesses. Nevertheless, there are only a limited number of types of strategies available to a political actor: these are confrontation, collaboration, and abstention.

Confrontation: The actor may choose to confront the government, demanding that it receive satisfaction for its demands. Confrontation can range from mild to belligerent (such as that practiced by guerrilla groups), but the uniting principle is that the group thinks that the object of the demand is appropriately theirs and **must** be delivered; if not, the group is prepared to take it, by force if necessary. Should a group wish to confront the government and **demand** that a certain policy be implemented or that they receive "x" amount of influence via cabinet posts or other significant positions, the group's level of resources should be quite high. This strategy is sometimes characterized as "negotiating from strength," wherein the actor is unwilling to concede much.

A strike by a public sector labor union is a typical confrontational strategy. In this instance, the union must have accurate information that the government will be damaged by a strike and that it does in fact have the capacity to meet the union's demands; it must have the economic resources to see a strike through and to help mitigate the hardships that its members will suffer; it must have status so that management will take it seriously; it must have legitimacy in the sense that the government needs the union's members, that it cannot easily hire replacements; and finally, the union must have the ability to back up its threats of violence to repel strikebreakers or sanctioning those who would cross picket lines.

Collaboration: A collaborative strategy requires substantially less in the way of resource endowment. Rather than a confrontational posture, the group agrees to collaborate or cooperate with the government on some issue or agenda. Nevertheless, in order to be listened to, the group must have something interesting or attractive to offer the government. It must have information or perhaps a unique idea regarding something about which the government has a keen interest. It might have particular economic resources that can help make an investment project work. Perhaps the status of the group might provide some additional legitimacy to the government. The point is that the group, in order to collaborate with the government, need not have a high level of resources across the board, as is the case with the confrontational strategy—sometimes a little bit of pertinent information or status will suffice. Under this strategy, positions are negotiable.

Abstention: Withdrawing from active pursuit of group demands can be a useful strategy, especially when the group finds its stock of resources nearly depleted. Abstention will allow the organization to halt the pursuit of demands with the government in order to attend to replenishment of resources that will enable the group to participate or negotiate once again. Since it is generally not the case that all the group's resources will be completely exhausted, the most abundant remaining resource should be wisely invested in activities that will produce more or other resources. For example, a small, non-traditional exporters association with little influence might adopt a low profile strategy to build that activity into such a potent foreign exchange earner that it will have to be taken into account by the government in setting the direction of export policy. It should be noted that abstention does require possession of at least a residual amount of resources; a complete absence would likely signify elimination of the group.

Put into matrix form, the amount of resources required for the different types of strategies can be found in Figure 3. It should be noted that each of the strategies is an analytical type, but in practice one will likely find a mixture of strategies being used.

Nevertheless, it is highly probable that one type of strategy will be stressed over another. It should also be mentioned that there are different degrees of each type of strategy: a mildly confrontative strategy requires much less in the way of resources than a strident confrontation. What is important to remember is that the resource level must be adequate to the type of strategy to be undertaken.

Figure 3
Resource Requirements for Political Strategies

Strategy	Information	Economics	Status	Authority/ Legitimacy	Violence
Confrontation	high	high	high	high	high
Collaboration	medium	medium	medium	medium	medium
Abstention	low	low	low	low	low

Resource Maintenance and Replenishment

For effective political participation, the maintenance of an adequate stock of political resources is vital — without resources the actor will be unable to influence the policy decision process; and without resources the government will find it difficult to make decisions, much less assure their implementation. Possession and maintenance of adequate resources is not automatic. If resources are simply consumed with little or no attention to their replenishment, they will soon be exhausted. Once exhausted, actors will find their influence substantially diminished. To retain influence then, consideration must be given both to the maintenance and production of resources. This requires that the politician or official pay attention to how resources are used—what benefits will the expenditure of a resource produce, both for the agency as well as for the recipient? To the extent that resources are in scarce supply, even more attention must be paid to the utilization of the **productive** capacity of those resources.

Summary: The Utility of Mapping

Mapping can serve several purposes. First, it can provide a graphic representation of the health of a regime or government. By indicating the level of support for the regime, the political map can tell us the condition or state of health of the government with respect to the making and implementation of important decisions. Second, it can tell us something about the vulnerabilities of the regime. The map should clearly indicate which key elements of support are missing or are merely lukewarm in their support; it can also show which important actors are in opposition, and the degree of their opposition.

Third, the map can detect the existence of opposing alliances and potential support coalitions. This will permit the government to concentrate on critical actors rather than wasting time on those that have little possibility of producing much in the way of support or benefits for the regime. Fourth, the political map can give a rather clear indication of the level of authority possessed by the regime, which is important for staking out the parameters of policy making. Depending on its level of support, the regime will have the authority to carry out certain types of policy but not others. Fifth, the map can also help to indicate implementation capacity by noting the position of instrumental actors such as the bureaucracy. While there may be permission to enact certain policies, the lack of a cooperative bureaucracy can easily sabotage the implementation of those policies. Finally, the map can detect new directions in policy. If the map indicates a gathering of support or actors in one area of the map, it may not indicate the formation of a coalition but a concentration of interest in opposition to current policy, which might ultimately cause the government to re-think its position.

Although a political map can be an extremely useful instrument for clarification, it is neither a crystal ball nor a substitute for good analysis or judgment. The map is merely a tool, and like other tools, its usefulness will depend on who wields it. The effectiveness of the map will depend both on the quality of data that goes into the construction of the map and the seriousness and quality of interpretation given the data on the map. If either are poor, the map loses utility and the decisions based on that map will suffer.

(See IPC Technical Note #5 for further discussion of environmental mapping techniques.)

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